

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-07 IO-13 DHA-05 PM-05

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 H-01 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 DODE-00 EUR-12 /096 W

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P 271105Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5326

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

US MISSION NEW YORK PRIORITY 558

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 1646

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, SO, EG

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN INFORMATION ON PLANNED USE OF CHEMICAL WAREFARE
IN OGADEN AND ON SOMALI BATTLEFIELD LOSSES

SUMMARY: EGYPTIAN MILATT CALLED ON ME WITH INFORMATION FROM
SOMALI SOURCES ALLEGING PLANNED ETHIOPIAN USE OF CHEMICAL
WAREFARE IN THE OGADEN, A REPORT WHICH SOMALIS SEEM TO TAKE
SERIOUSLY. HALIM ALSO PROVIDED FIGURES FROM SAME SOURCES ON
SOMALI BATTLEFIELD LOSSES. END SUMMARY

1. EGYPTIAN MILITARY ATTACHE COL HALIM CALLED ON ME SEPT 27
TO REPORT THAT HE HAS RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM THE SOMALI
GENERAL STAFF THAT THEY BELIEVE THAT THE ETHIOPIANS HAVE CHEMICAL
WEAPONS IN PLACE AND AVAILABLE, AND INTEND TO USE THEM IN THE
OGADEN.

ACCORDING TO THE SOMALIS, THE ETHIOPIANS ARE PREPARED TO JUSTIFY
USING CHEMICAL WAREFARE BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT THEY ARE
USING THEM ON THEIR OWN TERRITORY AND ON THEIR OWN PEOPLE,
SINCE THE SOMALIS WILL NOT ADMIT THAT REGULAR ARMY FORCES ARE

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DEPLOYED IN THE OGADEN. HALIM SAID THAT WHATEVER THE FACTS OF
THE CASE ARE, THE SOMALIS SEEM TO BE TAKING THE THREAT SERIOUSLY,
IN THE BELIEF THAT THE ETHIOPIANS WILL BE ABLE TO KNOCK OUT THE
SOMALI FORCES IN ONE COUP.

2. HALIM ALSO STATED THAT SOURCES IN THE SOMALI GENERAL STAFF
HAD PROVIDED THE EGYPTIAN OFFICERS ACCOMPANYING VP MUBARAK

WITH THE FOLLOWING FIGURES ON LOSSES OF MEN AND EQUIPMENT SUSTAINED BY REGULAR SOMALI FORCES, AND NOT COUNTING THE WSLF FORCES:

A. 30 PERCENT OF ALL TROOPS THUS FAR COMMITTED (WHETHER KILLED OR WOUNDED OR BOTH NOT SPECIFIED).

B. 70 PERCENT OF ALL TANKS IN THE ENTIRE SOMALI INVENTORY.

C. 60 PERCENT OF ALL RADIO EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING COMMUNICATIONS GEAR, AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT RADARS, IN THE INVENTORY.

D. 30 PERCENT OF ALL MILITARY TRUCKS IN THE INVENTORY.

E. 30 PERCENT OF ALL APCS IN THE INVENTORY.

F. 50 PERCENT OF ALL OPERATIONAL AIRCRAFT IN THE INVENTORY.

3. ACCORDING TO HALIM, THE EGYPTIANS HAVE FINALLY DECIDED THAT THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE ANY PILOTS, AIRCRAFT, TANKS, APCS, ROCKETS, ANTI-TANK WEAPONS AND MINES, BECAUSE THEY HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THESE WEAPONS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR THEIR OWN SECURITY.

4. HALIM STATED THAT NSS COMMANDER BRIG GEN AHMED SULEIMAN ABDULLAH IS PRESENTLY IN CAIRO AND WILL CONTINUE ON TO ROME,
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EXACT PURPOSE OF TRIP NOT SPECIFIED. HALIM HAS HEARD THE RUMOR, WHICH I HAVE ALSO HEARD ELSEWHERE, THAT SIAD WILL GO TO THE SUDAN AND ON TO CAIRO TO PLEAD FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. ANOTHER VERSION OF THE SAME RUMOR IS THAT SIAD WILL GO TO NEW YORK TO ADDRESS THE UNGA.

5. COMMENT: HALIM BELIEVES THAT THE SOMALIS ARE TAKING SERIOUSLY THE REPORT OF ETHIOPIAN WILLINGNESS TO USE CHEMICAL WEAPONS. HE ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE SOMALIS WERE FULLY CAPABLE OF USING THIS INFORMATION AS A SCARE TACTIC TO JUSTIFY ADDITIONAL REQUESTS FOR ARMS. THUS THE RUMOR ABOUT SIAD'S ADDRESSING THE UNGA COULD WELL BE A PLANNED SOMALI RESPONSE TO WHAT THEY SEE AS THE IMMINENT THREAT OF BEING WIPED OUT ON THE BATTLEFIELD BY CHEMICAL WARFARE. I AM HIGHLY SKEPTICAL OF THE ACCURACY OF THIS INFORMATION, UNLESS PERHAPS THE USE OF MILITARY TEAR GAS CAN BE TECHNICALLY CONSIDERED AS CHEMICAL WARFARE. I WOULD, HOWEVER, BE INTERESTING IN KNOWING IF TEAR GAS IS ACTUALLY CONSIDERED AS A CHEMICAL WEAPON AND IF IN FACT THE US EVER PROVIDED TEAR GAS TO THE ETHIOPIAN MILITARY.

6. WE HAVE SEEN NO OTHER INFORMATION TO CONFIRM THE
SOMALI FIGURES ON LOSSES IN THE OGADEN. WE WOULD BE
INTERESTED IN AN INTERPRETATION OF THESE FIGURES FROM
DIA AND WHAT IT WOULD MEAN IN TERMS OF THE SOMALIS'
ABILITY TO CONTINUE THE BATTLE.
LOUGHRAN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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